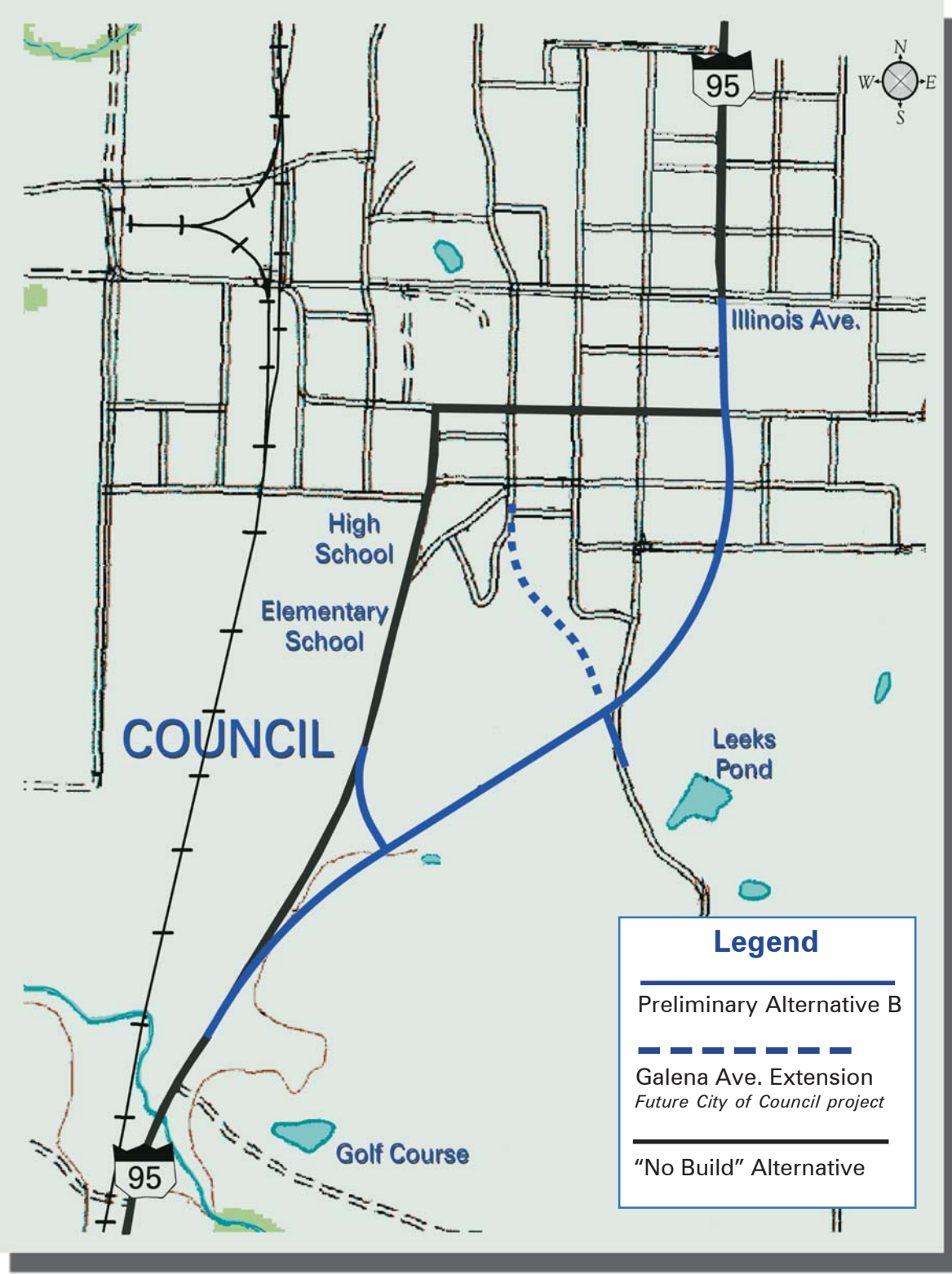


## Preliminary Alternatives



Alignments shown are approximate.

**Alternative B** – This route leaves the existing U.S. 95 on the north side of the golf course and travels northeast through the Idaho Transportation Department’s maintenance yard then reconnects to U.S. 95 at the corner of Illinois and U.S. 95.

**No Build** - A new route would not be built.

## Environmental



Project area from Jackson Creek Road looking northeast.

### What is the environmental process? Why is it required?

The National Environmental Policy Act was passed in 1969. The act, considered the “national charter” for protection of the environment, has three major goals:

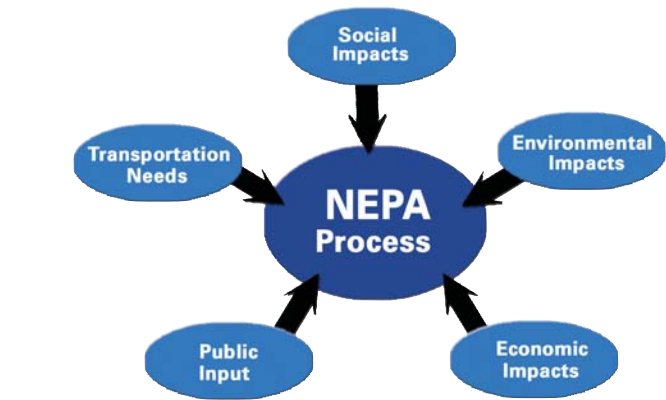
- Set national environmental policy
- Establish a basis for the environmental analysis
- Operate the Council on Environmental Quality

### National Environmental Policy Act requires:

- That federally funded projects be examined for potential impacts to social and environmental resources;
- That impacts to the human and natural resources be balanced with the public’s need for a safe and efficient transportation system; and
- That a full-disclosure environmental document be prepared for any project likely to have environmental impacts.

An environmental document reports impacts to cultural and historic sites, threatened and endangered species, recreation and land use, water and air quality, noise, wetlands, traffic, access, and safety.

The project team for the U.S. 95 Council Alternate Route has begun the environmental evaluation by doing topographical mapping, traffic counts, geotechnical investigations, and environmental fieldwork. This information, plus public input, will help determine roadway layout and design criteria. The information will also be used to recommend strategies for minimizing environmental impacts. Preparation of the environmental document is anticipated to take 2-3 years.



### Federal Highway Administration

The federal government provides financial assistance to the states to construct and improve the highway system. The Federal Highway Administration oversees the administration of federal dollars to the state projects. The Federal Highway Administration will review and approve the environmental document prepared by the Idaho Transportation Department. Without Federal Highway Administration approval, federal funding cannot be used.

### Resource Agencies

Resource agencies are state and federal regulatory agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. They will help identify natural resource issues and assist the Idaho Transportation Department in assessing concerns and regulations related to the U.S. 95 Council Alternate Route project.

### General Public

The public will be invited to attend informational meetings throughout the U.S. 95 Council Alternate Route project. The meetings will address concerns, answer questions and get input on the proposed improvements along the project corridor.

Mailings, media stories and newspaper advertisements will be used to announce public meetings.

### Local Government

Local government officials will be invited to participate in informational meetings throughout the project. The project team will keep local government officials informed of the project’s progress and get input from them.

## Environmental Process

1	Scoping	Activities
	During the scoping phase the transportation department gets input from the public and interested agencies to help identify design, environmental and public issues. Also, a range of alternatives is developed for consideration.	- Local meetings - Agency meetings - 1998 "citizens report"
2	Purpose and Need	- Completed by ITD and the project team - Approved by state and federal regulatory agencies
3	Alternatives Analysis	★ WE ARE HERE
4	Environmental Document	The information gathered during the alternatives analysis is used to complete the environmental document.
5	Public & Agency Review	The Federal Highway Administration will publish the environmental document for public and agency review and the Idaho Transportation Department will conduct a public hearing. The public hearing is usually held about a month after the publication date of the environmental document.
6	Final Document	Oral and written comments received at the public hearing are addressed in the final environmental document. The Idaho Transportation Department and the Federal Highway Administration then select the preferred alternative. The Federal Highway Administration approves the environmental document allowing the Idaho Transportation Department to proceed with final design and construction.



# What is happening now?

Work began on the project in the spring of 2003 with the project team becoming familiar with the project area through site visits and investigations.

As a first step in the evaluation process, the eight alternatives named in the citizen report, plus the “No Build” Alternative, were analyzed. The results of the analysis were presented to state and federal regulatory agencies in the fall of 2003.



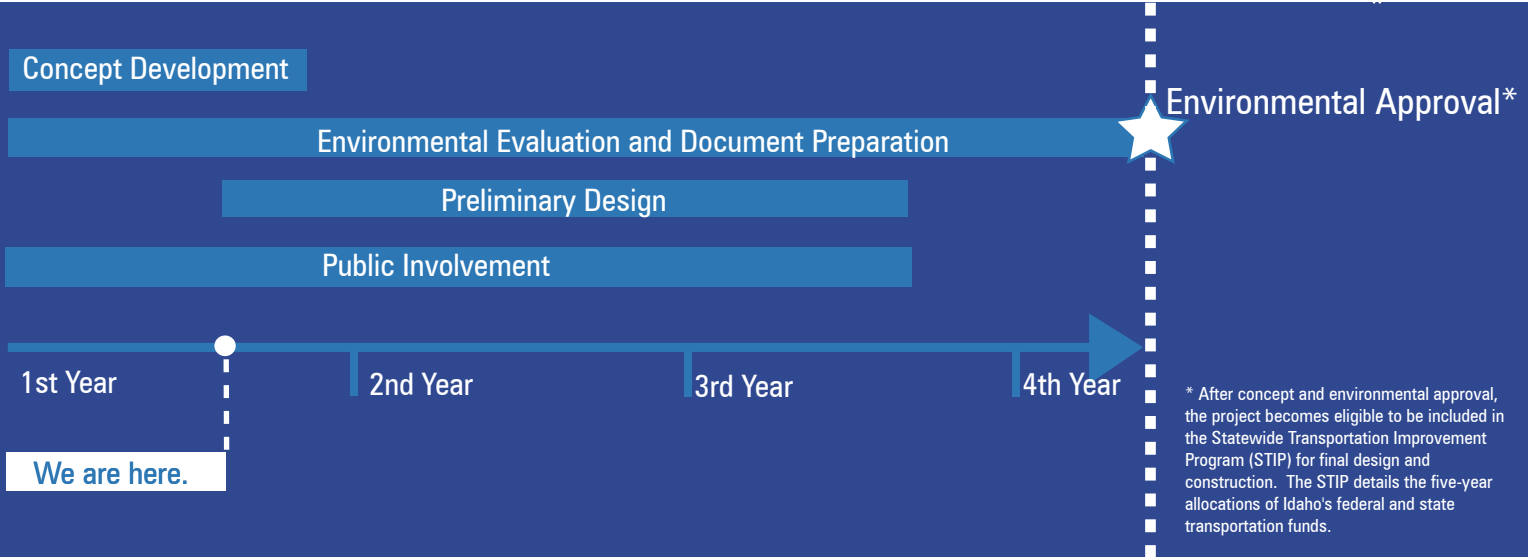
Approximate location of Alternative B looking due west.



Approximate location of Alternative B looking southwest.

Alternative B and the “No Build” Alternative are being evaluated in more detail to determine their environmental impacts.


# Project Schedule



# What's Next?

Over the next several months, the project team will complete conceptual and preliminary design; gather and analyze environmental, geological, traffic and survey information; and complete the National Environmental Policy Act process.

A public meeting is planned for 2004. Project officials will be available to explain the process and alternatives, to listen to your concerns, and answer your questions. Council residents and other interested groups will be notified by advertisement in the local newspaper and/or by direct mailing about meeting details.



**Project Contacts:**

Gwen Smith Public Involvement Coordinator Idaho Transportation Department P.O. Box 7129 Boise, ID 83707-1129 (208) 334-4444	Wade Christiansen ITD Project Manager 8150 Chinden Boulevard Boise, ID 83714-1367 334-8969	Daris Bruce ITD Project Development Engineer 8150 Chinden Boulevard Boise, ID 83714-1367 334-8300
--	--	---

Submit **written comments** to the ITD Public Involvement Corrdinator, at the above address.



Idaho Transportation Department  
P.O. Box 7129  
Boise, ID 83707-1129

BULK RATE  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
BOISE, IDAHO  
PERMIT NO. 143

## Project Background

U.S. 95 is an important highway for the local community and for motorists traveling between northern and southern Idaho. Vehicles large and small, traveling through Adams County, are currently routed through the heart of downtown Council.



U.S. 95 in Council.

The highway makes two 90-degree turns within Council’s city limits. Parked cars create problems for trucks and recreational vehicles trying to make the turns. The trucks create hazards for other vehicles and pedestrians.

In 1998 the Council Chamber of Commerce submitted a “citizens’ report” to the City Council recommending that an alternate route be considered. The report identified eight possible alternatives to the current U.S. 95 alignment.

The city council gathered public input on possible U.S. 95 alternate routes. In 2000 they recommended two alternatives to the Idaho Transportation Department. The U.S. 95 Council Alternate Route was added to the State Transportation Improvement Program later that year. Preliminary development and the environmental evaluation began in early 2003.

## What the project proposes to do?

The transportation department is investigating an alternate route for U.S. 95 to be located within an area north of Jackson Creek Road, approximately two miles south of Council, to the intersection of U.S. 95 and Illinois Avenue in Council.

The purpose of this project is to improve pedestrian and traffic safety, reduce congestion, and reduce U.S. 95 through-traffic within the downtown and southerly areas in Council.

